

8

THE SIXTH EDITION.

A
POETICAL AND CONGRATULATORY
E P I S T L E
TO
JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

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1911

A
POETICAL AND CONGRATULATORY
E P I S T L E



T O

JAMES BOSWELL, Esq.

O N H I S

JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES,

WITH THE CELEBRATED

Dr. J O H N S O N.

.....

By PETER PINDAR, Esq.

— Τρώισσιν ἰσάλετο Κυδὼ ὀρίξαι. —

HOMER.

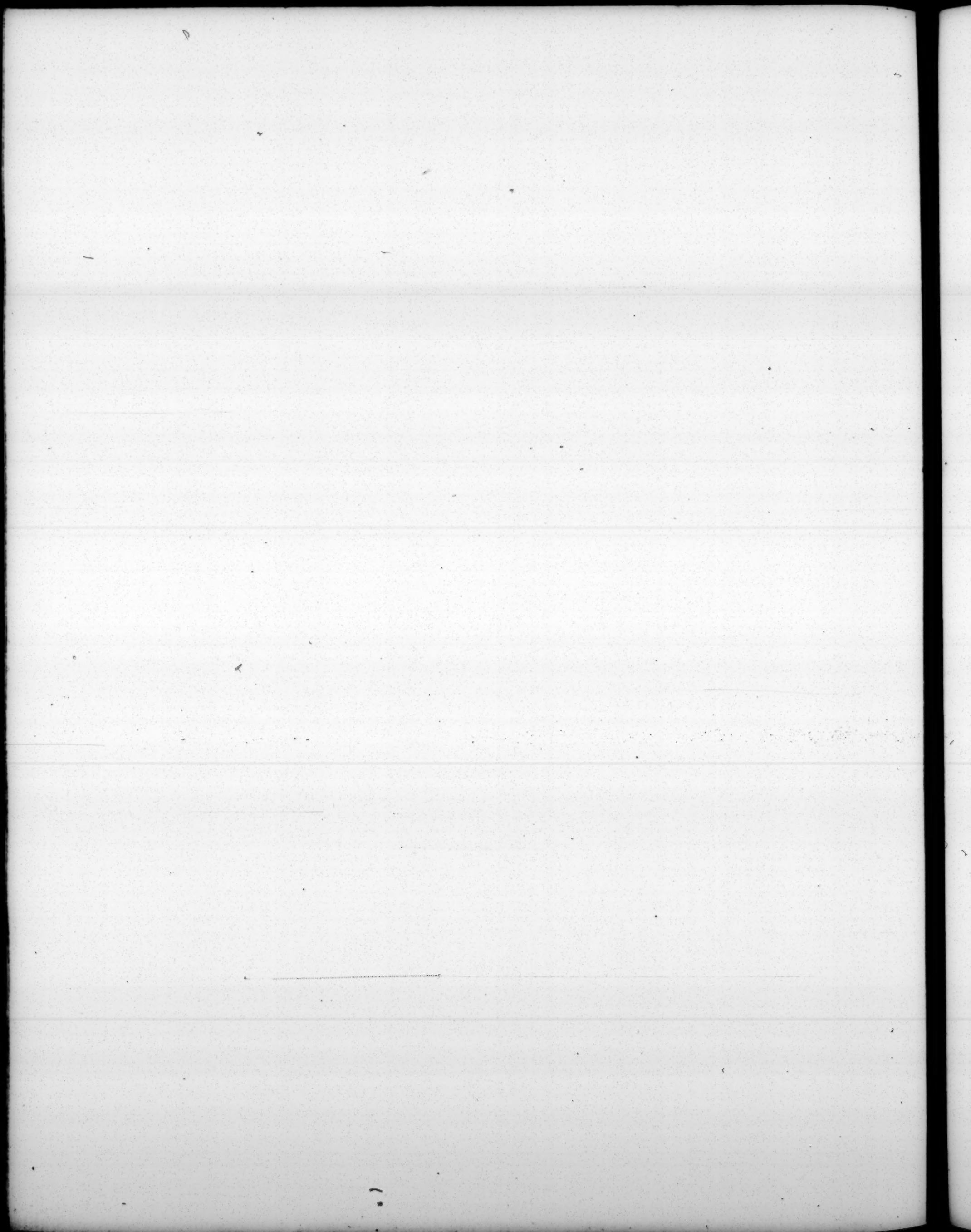
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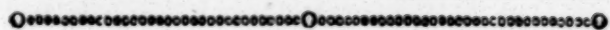
M,DCC,LXXXVII.





A

POETICAL EPISTLE, &c.



O BOSWELL, Bozzy, Bruce,* whate'er thy name,
Thou mighty shark for anecdote and fame;
Thou Jackall, leading lyon Johnson forth
To eat M'Pherson† 'midst his native North;
To frighten grave professors with his roar,
And shake the Hebrides from shore to shore—

* Vide Note, page 16.

† The translator (but in Dr. Johnson's opinion the author) of the Poems attributed to OSSIAN.

B

All

All hail!—At length, ambitious Thane, thy rage

To give one spark to Fame's bespangled page

Is amply gratified—a thousand eyes

Survey thy book with rapture and surprize!

Loud, of thy Tour, a thousand tongues have spoken,

And wonder'd that thy bones were never broken!

Triumphant, thou through Time's vast gulph shalt sail,

The pilot of our literary whale;

Close to the classic Rambler shalt thou cling,

Close as a supple courtier to a king,

Fate shall not shake thee off with all its pow'r,

Stuck like a bat, to some old ivy'd tow'r.

Nay, though thy Johnson ne'er had bless'd thy eyes,

Paoli's deeds had rais'd thee to the skies!

Yes!

Yes! his broad wing had rais'd thee, (no bad hack)
 A tom-tit twitt'ring on an eagle's back.

THOU, curious scrapmonger, shalt live in song
 When death hath still'd the rattle of thy tongue;
 E'en future babes to lisp thy name shall learn,
 And Bozzy join with Wood, and Tommy Hearn,
 Who drove the spiders from much prose and rhyme,
 And snatch'd old stories from the jaws of Time.

Sweet is thy page,* I ween, that doth recite
 How Thou and Johnson, arm in arm, one night,
 March'd through fair Edinburgh's Pactolian show'rs,
 Which Cloacina bountifully pours;
 Those gracious show'rs that fraught with fragrance flow,
 And gild, like gingerbread, the world below.

How

* Vide, page 13.

How sweetly grumbled too was Sam's remark,

" I smell you, Master Bozzy, in the dark."

Alas ! historians are confounded dull,

A dim Bæotia reigns in every skull ;

Mere beasts of burthen, broken-winded, flow,

Heavy as dromedaries, on they go ;

Whilst THOU, a Will-o'-wisp, art here, art there,

Wild darting coruscations ev'ry where.

What tasteless mouth can gape, what eye can close,

What head can nod o'er thy enlivening prose ?

To other's works, the works of *thy* inditing

Are downright di'monds to the eyes of whiting.

Think not I flatter thee, my flippant friend :

For well I know that flatt'ry would offend :

Yet

Yet honest praise, I'm sure, thou would'st not shun,

Born with a STOMACH to digest a TUN!

Who can refuse a smile that reads thy page,

Where furly Sam, inflam'd with Tory rage,

Naffau, bescondrels, and with anger big,

Swears WHIGS are *rogues*, and ev'ry ROGUE a *Whig*?

Who will not too, thy pen's *minutiæ* blefs,

That gives posterity the Rambler's * drefs?

Methinks I view his full, plain suit of brown,

The large grey bushey wig that grac'd his crown,

Black worsted stockings, little silver buckles,

And shirt that had no ruffles for his knuckles.

I mark the brown great-coat of cloth he wore,

That two huge Patagonian pockets bore,

C

Which

* Vide p. 9.

Which Patagonians (wond'rous to unfold !)

Would fairly both his Dictionaries hold.

I see the Rambler* on a large bay mare,

Just like a Centaur ev'ry danger dare,

On a full gallop dash the yielding wind,

The colt and Bozzy scamp'ring close behind.

Of Lady Lochbuy † with what glee we read,

Who offer'd Sam for breakfast, cold sheep's head ;

Who press'd and worried by his dame so civil,

Wish'd the sheep's head and woman's at the devil.

I see you sailing both in Buchan's‡ pot—

Now storming an old woman § and her cot,

Who terrify'd at each tremendous shape,

Deem'd you two demons ready for a rape.

I see

* P. 376. † P. 429. ‡ P. 104. § P. 143.

I see all marv'ling at M'Leod's together
 On Sam's remarks* on whey, and tanning leather ;
 At Corrichatachin's, † the Lord knows how,
 I see thee, Bozzy, drunk as David's fow,
 And begging, with rais'd eyes and lengthned chin,
 Heav'n not to damn thee for the deadly fin.
 I see too, the stern moralist regale,
 And pen a Latin ode to Mrs. Thrale. ‡
 I see, without a night-cap on his head,
 Rare sight! bald Sam in the Pretender's || bed.
 I hear (what's wonderful!) unfought by studying,
 His classic dissertation upon pudding. §
 Of PROVOST JOPP, ¶ I mark the marv'ling face,
 Who gave the RAMBLER's freedom with a *grace*.

I see

* P. 299. † P. 317. ‡ P. 177. || P. 216. § P. 440. ¶ P. 39.

I see too, trav'ling from the ISLE OF EGG,*
 The humble servant † of a horse's leg;
 And SNIP, the taylor, from the ISLE OF MUCK,‡
 Who stitched in SKY with tolerable luck.
 I see the horn that drunkards must adore;
 The horn, the mighty horn of Rorie More;§
 And bloody shields that guarded hearts in quarrels,
 Now guard from rats the milk and butter barrels.
 Methinks the Caledonian dame I see
 Familiar fitting on the RAMBLER's knee,
 Charming, with kisses sweet, the chuckling sage:
 Melting with sweetest smiles the frost of age;
 Like SOL, who darts at times a chearful ray
 O'er the wan visage of a winter's day.

“ Do

* P. 275. † A Blacksmith. ‡ P. 275. § P. 254.

“ Do it again, my dear,” (I hear Sam cry)

“ See who first tires, my charmer, *you* or *I*.”

I see thee stuffing, with a hand uncouth,

An old dry'd whiting in thy Johnson's mouth,

And lo! I see, with all his might and main,

Thy Johnson spit the whiting out again.

Rare anecdotes! 'tis anecdotes like these,

That bring thee glory, and the million please!

On these, shall future Times delighted stare,

Thou charming haberdasher of small ware!

STEWART and ROBERTSON, from *thee*, shall learn,

The simple charms of HIST'RY to discern:

To *thee*, fair HIST'RY's palm, shall LIVY yield,

And TACITUS, to BOZZY, leave the field!

D

Joe

JOE MILLER'S self, whose page such fun, provokes,

Shall quit his shroud, to grin at Bozzy's jokes !

How are we all with rapture touch'd, to see

Where, when, and at what hour, you swallow'd tea !

How, *once*, to grace his Affiatic treat,

Came haddocks, which the RAMBLER could not eat.

Pleas'd, on thy book thy SOV'REIGN'S eye-balls roll,

Who loves a gossip's story from his soul !

Blest with the mem'ry of the Persian king,*

HE, *ev'ry body* knows, and *ev'ry thing* ;

Who's dead, who's married, what poor girl beguil'd,

Hath *lost* a paramour, and *found* a child ;

Which gard'ner hath most cabbages and peas,

And which old woman hath most hives of bees ;

Which

Which farmer boasts the most prolific fows,
 Cocks, hens, geese, turkies, goats, sheep, bulls and cows;
 Which barber, best the ladies locks can curl;
 Which house in Windsor, fells the finest purl;
 Which CHIMNEY-SWEEP, best beats, in gold array,
 His brush, and shovel, on the first of May:
 Whose dancing dogs, in rigadoons excel;
 And whose the puppet-flew, that bears the bell;
 Which clever SMITH, the prettiest man-trap* makes,
 To save from thieves, the royal ducks and drakes;
 The Guinea hens and peacocks with their eggs;
 And catch his loving subjects by the legs.

O! since

* His M——y hath planted a number of those trusty guardians around his park at Windsor, for the Benefit of the public.

O! since the PRINCE OF GOSSIPS, reads thy book,

To what high honours may not Bozzy look ?

The sunshine of his smile, may soon be thine—

Perchance, in converse thou may'st hear him shine:

Perchance, to stamp thy merit through the nation,

He begs of Johnson's life, thy Dedication ;

Asks questions* of thee, O thou lucky elf,

And *kindly answers* ev'ry one *himself*.

Blest with the classic learning† of a college,

Our K—g is not a *miser* in his knowledge :

Nought

* Just after Dr. Johnson had been honoured with an interview with a certain great personage, in the Queen's library at Buckingham House, he was interrogated by a friend concerning his reception, and his opinion of the r-y-l intellect.—His M——y seems to be possessed of much good nature, and much curiosity ; (replied the Doctor) as for his *us*, it is far from contemptible.—His M——y indeed was *multifarious* in his *questions* ; but, thank God, he answered them all *himself*.

† This is a very extraordinary Circumstance, as the late P——s D——R retained three parts of the money ordered for the education of her Children. *The effect* of this absurd conduct was so conspicuous in her daughter M——A, that the letters received from her during her residence at Denmark, were absolutely unintelligible.

Nought in the storehouse of his brain turns musty :

No razor-wit, for want of use, grows rusty.

Whate'er his head suggests, whate'er he knows,

Free as election beer from tubs, it flows !

Yet, ah ! superior far !—it boasts the merit

Of never *fuddling* people with the *spirit* !

Say, Bozzy, *when*, to bless our anxious fight,

When shall thy volume* burst the gates of light ?

O, cloath'd in calf, ambitious brat be born—

Our kitchens, parlours, libraries, adorn !

My Fancy's keen anticipating eye,

A thousand charming anecdotes can spy :

* The Life of Dr. Johnson.

I read, I read of G---ge the *learn'd** display
 On LOUTH's and WARBURTON's immortal fray :
 Of G---ge, whose brain, if right the mark I hit,
 Forms one huge Cyclopædia of wit :
 That holds the wisdom of a thousand ages,
 And frightens all his WORKMEN and his PAGES !
 O Bozzy, still, thy tel-tale plan pursue :
 The world is wond'rous fond of something *new* ;
 And, let but SCANDAL's breath embalm thy page,
 It lives a *welcome guest* from age to age,
 Not only say who *breathes* an arrant knave,
 But who hath sneak'd a rascal to his *grave* :

Make

• His M——y's *commentary* on the quarrel, in which the BISHOP and the DOCTOR pelted one the other with dirt so *gracefully*, will be a *treasure* to the lovers of literature! Mr. B. hath as good as promised it to the PUBLIC, and we hope, means to keep his word.

Make o'er his turf (in VIRTUE's cause) a rout,
 And, like a *d-mn'd good Christian*, pull him out.
 Without a fear, on *families*, harangue,
 Say who shall lose their ears, and who shall hang;
 Publish the demireps, and punks—nay more,
 Declare what virtuous wife, *will be* a wh-re.
 Thy brilliant brain, conjecture, can supply,
 To charm through ev'ry leaf, the eager eye.
 The BLUE STOCKING* society describe,
 And give thy comment on each joke, and gibe:
 Tell what the *women* are, their wit, their quality,
 And dip them in the streams of *immortality*!

Let

* A club mostly composed of learned ladies, to which Mr. B. was admitted.

Let LORD M'DONALD threat thy breech, to kick,*
 And o'er thy shrinking shoulders, shake his stick :
 Treat with contempt, the menace of this Lord,
 'Tis HIST'RY's province, BOZZY, to *record*.
 Though WILKES abuse thy brain, that *airy mill*,
 And swear poor JOHNSON *murther'd* by thy quill;
 What's that to thee? Why let the *victim* bleed —
 Thy end is answer'd, if the Nation *read*.
 The fiding Knight, † and *tuneful* Mrs. Thrale,
 Who frequent *bobb'd* or *nobb'd* with Sam, in ale,

Snatch

* A letter of *severe* remonstrance was sent to Mr. B. who, in consequence, omitted, in the second Edition of his Journal, what is so generally pleasing to the public, viz. the *scandalous passages* relative to this Nobleman.

† Sir John Hawkins, who (as well as Mrs. Thrale, now Madam Piozzi) threatens us with the life of the late lexicographer.

Snatch up the pen (as thirst of fame inspires !)
 To write his *jokes* and *stories* by their fires :
 Then why not THOU, each joke and tale enroll,
 Who like a watchful cat, before a hole,
 Full twenty years (inflam'd with letter'd pride)
 Did'st mousing sit before SAM's mouth so wide,
 To catch as many scraps as thou wert able—
 A very LAZ'RUS at the RICH MAN's table ?
 What, tho' against thee PORTERS* bounce the door,
 And bid thee hunt for secrets, *there* no more,

* This is literary true—Nobody is at home.—Our great people want the Taste
 to relish Mr. Boswell's vehicles to immortality. Though in LONDON, poor Bozzy
 is in a *desart*.

With pen and ink so ready at thy coat,
 EXCISEMAN-LIKE, each syllable to note,
 That giv'n to PRINTERS DEVILS, (a precious load!)
 On wings of PRINT, comes flying all abroad?
 Watch then the venal VALETS—smack the MAIDS,
 And try with gold to make them *rogues* and *jades*:
 Yet should their honesty, thy bribes, relent;
 Fly to thy *fertile genius*, and *invent*:
 Like old VOLTAIRE, who plac'd his greatest glory
 In cooking up an *entertaining* story;
 Who laugh'd at TRUTH, whene'er her *simple* tongue
 Would snatch *amusement* from a tale or song.
 O! whilst amid the anecdotic mine,
 Thou labour'st hard to bid thy HERO shine,

Run

Run to Bolt Court,* exert thy CURL-like† foul,
 And fish for golden leaves from hole to hole ;
 Find when he eat and drank, and cough'd, and sneez'd—
 Let all his *motions* in thy book be squeez'd :
 On tales *however strange* , impose thy claw ;
 Yes, let thy amber lick up ev'ry straw :
 SAM's nods, and winks, and laughs, will form a *treat* ;
 For all that breathes of JOHNSON *must* be *great* !
 Blest be thy labours, most advent'rous Bozzi,
 Bold rival of Sir John, and Dame Piozzi ;
 Heav'ns! with what laurels shall thy head be crown'd!
 A *grove*, a *forest*, shall thy ears, surround !

Yes !

* In Fleet-Street, where the Doctor lived and died.

† CURL, the bookseller, frequently bribed People to hunt the temples of Cloacina for Pope's and Swift's Letters.

Yes! whilst the RAMBLER shall a COMET blaze,
And gild a world of darkness with his rays,
THEE too, that WORLD, with wonderment, shall hail,
A lively, bouncing CRACKER at his TAIL!

POSTSCRIPT.

P O S T S C R I P T.

AS Mr. BOSWELL's Journal hath afforded such universal pleasure by the relation of minute incidents, and the great Moralist's opinion of men and things, during his northern tour; it will be adding greatly to the anecdotal treasury, as well as making Mr. B. happy, to communicate part of a Dialogue that took place between Dr. Johnson and the Author of this Congratulatory Epistle, a few months before the Doctor paid the great debt of nature. The Doctor was very chearful that day, had on a black coat and waistcoat, a black plush pair of breeches, and black worsted stockings; a handsome grey wig, a shirt, a muslin neck-cloth, a black pair of buttons in his shirt sleeves, a pair of shoes, ornamented with the very identical little buckles that accompanied the philosopher to the Hebrides; his nails were very neatly pared, and his beard fresh shaved by a razor fabricated by the ingenious Mr. Savigny.

P. P. "Pray, Doctor, what is your Opinion of Mr. Boswell's literary powers?"

Johnson. "Sir, my opinion is, that whenever Boszy expires, he will create no *vacuum* in the region of literature—he seems strongly affected by the *cacoethes scribendi*; wishes to be thought a *rara avis*, and in truth so he is—your knowledge in ornithology, Sir, will easily discover, to what species of bird I allude." Here the Doctor shook his head and laughed.

P. P. "What think you, Sir, of his account of Corfica?—Of his character of Paoli?"

G

Johnson.

Johnson. “ Sir, he hath made a mountain of a wart. But Paoli has virtues. The account is a farrago of disgusting egotism and pompous inanity.”

P. P. “ I have heard it whispered, Doctor, that should you die before him, Mr. B. means to write your life.”

Johnson. “ Sir, he cannot mean me so irreparable an injury.—Which of us shall die first, is only known to the Great Disposer of Events ; but were I sure that James Boswell would write *my* life, I do not know whether I would not anticipate the measure, by taking *his*.” (Here he made three or four strides across the room, and returned to his chair with violent emotion.)

P. P. “ I am afraid that he means to do you the favour.”

Johnson. “ He dares not—he would make a scarecrow of me. I give him liberty to fire his blunderbuss in *his own* face, but not murder *me*. Sir, I heed not *his* *αὐτοεφα*—BOSWELL write my life ! why the fellow possesses not abilities for writing the life of an *ephemera*.”

F I N I S.

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THE
L O U S I A D:
A N
HEROI-COMIC POEM.
C A N T O I.

By *PETER PINDAR, Esq.*

Prima Syracosio, dignata est ludere Versu
Nostra, nec erubuit Sylvas habitare Thalia;
Cum Canerem Reges et Prælia, Cynthus Aurem,
Vellit et admonuit——

VIRGIL.

I, who so *lately* in my lyric Lays
Sung to the Praise and Glory of R—A——s;
And sweetly tun'd to Love the melting Line,
With *Ovid's* Art, and *Sappho's* Warmth divine;
Said (nobly daring!) "MUSE *exalt* thy Wings,
"LOVE, and the SONS OF CANVAS, quit for K—GS."
APOLLO, laughing at my Powers of Song,
Cry'd, "PETER PINDAR, prithee hold thy Tongue."
But I, like *Poets*, *self-sufficient* grown,
Reply'd "APOLLO, prithee hold thy *own*."

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